



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
1102 SE Quince Street • PO Box 47990
Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

February 4, 2002

The Honorable Eileen Cody, Chair
House Health Care Committee
John L O'Brien Building, Room 245-A
Olympia, Washington 98504-0600

Dear Representative Cody:

As chair of the Washington State Board of Health, I am writing to support House Bill 1549, concerning minors' access to tobacco products, which will be heard before your committee tomorrow.

As part of its work during 2000, the Board developed a "menu of health services" that would guide efforts by local jurisdictions to promote access to the most critical services. This menu contains only those health services that our independently contracted medical researchers told us were safe, effective, and likely to produce significant community health benefits. One of the behavioral risks identified was tobacco use, one of the target populations was teens, and one of the categories for effective intervention was in the area of policy.

In addition to including tobacco use on its menu of critical health service, the Board has passed two resolutions that address the issue of tobacco use. Resolution No. 99-100, passed December 8, 1999, supports the dedicated use of tobacco settlement funds for tobacco prevention and control programs. Resolution No. 00-002, approved December 6, 2000, urges that all levels of government place a clear priority on maintaining essential public health services and programs, including "no less than current level efforts at tobacco prevention programs."

House Bill 1549 provides an effective policy improvement that will further discourage teen tobacco use at no additional cost to the state. It is good public health policy.

Sincerely,

Linda Lake, Chair
Washington State Board of Health

cc: Members of the House Health Care Committee
Ree Sailors, Governor's Office of Health Policy
Patty Hayes, Department of Health
Members of the Washington State Board of Health
Don Sloma, State Board of Health